Dr Dewees –

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An

Inaugural Dissertation

on

Amenorrhœa

by

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of

Philadelphia –

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On Amenorrhœa.

This disease presents the two following varieties –

1st. Emansio ------ Retention of the Menses.
2nd. Suppressio ------ Suppression of the Menses.

By the first we are to understand a failure of the appearance of the menses, when the woman has attained the age of puberty.

By the second is meant the interruption of the action after it has been established, independent of pregnancy and suckling.

It is unnecessary to mention the various theories employed to explain the efficient cause of menstruation, as they can afford no assistance in the present inquiry –

The time in which the secretion, and consequently the flow of the menses commences, varies from many causes; chiefly climate, mode of life, structure

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body, and idiosyncracies of the constitution.

In a warm climate where the developement of the body is rapid, the period may be accelerated, so that at eight or nine years of age this process may commence, while in the more temperate zones it is usually retarded until the fourteenth or fifteenth, and in the arctic regions till the nineteenth or twentieth year.

A delicate girl, debilitated by an indulgence in luxury and indolence, and the sedentary seamstress, or the laborious peasant may equally experience premature developement, or retarded expansion.

Emansio, sometimes may depend upon imperfection of structure — Cases are recorded where it has never taken place; in these, the ovaries or uterus have been found wanting, or but imperfectly developed.

The menses not appearing at the usual period should not always be considered as disease; it should only be looked upon as such, when it creates a disturbance in some functions of the system.

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Should the patient enjoy health, we should wait; lest by inapportune remedies we interrupt the work of nature; still however much anxiety is evinced, and the physician is frequently so importuned by the friends of the patient that he is sometimes under the necessity of employing an innocent stratagem, to prevent mischief from the interference of an incautious practitioner.

We shall briefly state the causes, symptoms, and treatment of the two varieties of the disease under consideration.

Causes. Emansio may be owing to imperfect developement - or to the want of some peculiar stimulus or condition of the uterus though well developed.

Symptoms. This disease usually commences with lassitude and indisposition to motion, or exertion; a failure of animation, or depression of spirits, with a pale or sallow complexion, and when long continued even a cachectic appearance. The functions of the stomach are deranged, and various symptoms of dyspepsia shew themselves;

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and as nausea, heartburn, flatulence &c; the appetite for natural food is diminished and an unaccountable desire for the most innutrient substances, as chalk, lime, charcoal, clay &c supervenes. The respiration is hurried by any quick or laborious motion of the body, with palpitation of the heart, and even syncope. The bowels are often irregular; most frequently inclined however to be constipated. With pains in the head, back, and loins. As the disease advances, the legs and feet become adematous, and at length the serum flows into the cellular membrane of the whole body producing a general anasarca. The pulse is quick and low, with great inactivity in the small vessels, and coldness of the extreme parts of the body. There is also a distressing cough; and so great sometimes that the patient is thought to be on the verge of phthisis, or perhaps to be passing rapidly through its stages.

In the worst degree of this complaint, by a little mucous, or serous discharge perhaps somewhat coloured, nature sometimes changes the scene and gives an

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Treatment [illegible]

with the proper attention to clothing, protecting the [illegible] against sudden cold, and wearing flannel next to [illegible] by agreeable [illegible] with what are called non-stimulants [illegible] of the use of [illegible] in connexion [illegible] a moderate amount [illegible] of a light but nourishing [illegible], [illegible] [illegible] fermented drinks, and in which food [illegible] of a vegetable kind.

The second indication may be met by general local stimulation of the [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] appears [illegible] efficient [illegible] [illegible] of [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] in [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] of the [illegible] [illegible] with any [illegible].

Washing the [illegible] with warm water is an [illegible] one [illegible], especially [illegible] the [illegible] of the [illegible].

The influence of the alcoholic preparations when [illegible] is not an [illegible] has been [illegible],

[illegible] in high estimation.

Inasmuch as the complete plan of treatment [illegible] will rarely fail to bring about the [illegible] and permanent establishment of the menstrual [illegible] the first condition of the system to which we have [illegible]

On the second condition, or where the menstrual development exists and the catamenia [illegible] [illegible] the plan details [illegible]

Applications indicated above to be [illegible] of causing the [illegible] [illegible] in the constitution to effect the desired [illegible] It is therefore [illegible] these [illegible] [illegible] the effected [illegible] system are [illegible] that we ought to employ the [illegible] treatment.

These concurrent effects are [illegible] by the existence of pain in the loins [illegible] [illegible] in consequence of the [illegible] after the [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible] time.—

[illegible] retention of the [illegible] after it has taken place is not to be considered as a state of disease [illegible] first appearance it is not always immediately [illegible] with perfect regularity, and especially with those who [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] accompanied with chlorotic symptoms may be seen, cases of retention are treated accordingly.

On the other hand the discharge may at any time be suppressed from great general debility or be due cause and [illegible] that ultimately [illegible] chronic affection [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

In such cases the suppression is merely [illegible] of other affections and does not itself become object of medical treatment.

[illegible] Cold seems to be the most common cause of [illegible] suppression of the catamenia. The influence

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[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] nervous system, and
[illegible] [illegible] with the [illegible]
[illegible] uterus.

It is affirmed by some that [illegible]
[illegible] of these causes and [illegible] [illegible]
[illegible] as from the brain [illegible] [illegible] the
[illegible] are suppressed [illegible] [illegible] the brain
[illegible] [illegible] at the [illegible] [illegible] the nervous
[illegible] hysterical and other nervous affections
[illegible] [illegible] to a formidable extent.

[illegible] almost. To control the [illegible] of a side
[illegible] of the mouth [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

yet failed in our hands – we give it with a confidence we attach to no other medicine for this purpose; for this confidence is the result of very many years experience of its efficacy –

This great success is attributable to a due preparation of the system, and a steady perseverance in this valuable acquisition to the Materia Medica.